

with some of the largest muggers shot in India and what the record length is.

BIKANER.

THE SECRETARY TO THE

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HEIR-APPARENT OF BIKANER.

[In the second edition of the Fauna British India (Reptilia) the Muzzer (*C. palustris*) is said to attain a total length of 4 metres (approximately 13 ft. 2 in.). The Estuary Crocodile (*C. porosus*) is said to attain a length of 33 ft. but individuals exceeding 20 ft. are rare. We should be glad to receive from readers of the *Journal*, measurements of large muzzer which they may have occasion to take.—Eds.]

XVIII.—NOTE ON THE LOGGERHEAD TURTLE [*CARETTA C. OLIVACEA* (ESCHSCHOLTZ)] DEPOSITING ITS EGGS.

(With a plate).

On Saturday, 3rd March, at about 4 p.m. on Malad-Merve beach, I was idly watching the sea when a curious upheaval, which subsequently resolved itself into something which looked like the Loch Ness monster, showed up near the edge of the water, and proceeded to steadily move towards the shore. I walked down to have a look and saw a large turtle emerge. The turtle crawled laboriously from the edge of the sea up to about 6 ft. above the high water mark at the foot of the sand dunes. Her progress was slow and she frequently stopped and held her head in the air swallowing vigorously. On arrival at the foot of the sand dunes, she immediately set to work to dig a hole with powerful alternate strokes from her hind flippers, holding herself rigidly in position by her fore flippers. She gradually deepened the hole until she had got quite a respectable excavation about a foot wide and 18 or 19 inches deep. Towards the last, it was curious to see the tremendous efforts she made to get her back flippers down to the maximum extent possible into the hole in order to dig it as deep as possible.

The two photographs show her clearly

- (a) at the point where she is flipping out the sand with her body in a horizontal position,
- (b) straining to get her back flippers down into the hole to the maximum extent.

By this time, quite a large crowd of villagers and others had gathered around her. She took not the slightest notice of anybody, but continued to dig. She then settled down flat on the top of the hole. One of the villagers started digging a deeper hole behind the egg-chamber and tunnelled through to it. As her eggs dropped, they rolled through the tunnel and he removed them. In all she laid 122 eggs about the size of ping-pong balls, with a tough skin of a whitish-blue hue.

The whole process of laying took about 12 minutes. The villager then quickly covered up his hole so as not to disturb her.



1. Loggerhead Turtle [*Caretta c. olivacea* (Eschscholtz)] commencing to scoop a hole in the sand before depositing eggs.



2. Loggerhead Turtle (*C. c. olivacea*) deepening the hole in the sand to its maximum depth.

*Photos by J. B. Greaves.*